

A Brazilian Musical Celebration Finds Its New York Expression

Contributed by José Curbelo
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In Northeastern Brazil a forró party unites communities and generations, with couples dancing, locked in a sensual embrace, to accordion, zabumba and triangle. This collective celebration is a creative response to the difficulties of life in the Northeast and an expression of fantastic musical intelligence and wit.

Rob Curto's Forró For All has brought this musical style to the United States. Forró for All is a band dedicated to the sound of Northeastern Brazil's traditional "forró pé de serra" dance music, performed with a sensibility born of New York City's diverse and dynamic musical culture.

Forró For All's founding member, Rob Curto, is a musician who both respects and transcends idioms, mixing elements of jazz with a language and feel that is distinctly Brazilian.

A native New Yorker and important member of that city's world music and jazz scene, Rob has also spent years intimately involved with the music and culture of the Brazilian Northeast.

He studied with great accordionists from Pernambuco, Brazil such as Arlindo dos Oito Baixos, Camarão and Silveirinha, and with guitarist and master of harmony Alencar 7-Cordas from Paraíba.

Rob keeps as his bible the work of Dominginhos (with whom he has performed), Sivuca, Oswaldinho, Hermeto Pascoal and of course the great innovator of forró, Luiz Gonzaga.

He has spent years working as a musician in Brazil, and developed a reputation there as an extremely skillful and artistic forró accordionist.

In addition his work includes playing and collaboration with heavy-weights of world music such as Lila Downs, David Krakauer, Cyro Baptista, Frank London and Omar Faruk Tekbilek.

Rob Curto's Forró For All has been featured at venues like: 2007 Festival International de Louisiane in Lafayette, Louisiana, the Chicago World Music Festival, the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles, and many others. In California, they also will be featured at the 2007 Cotati Accordion Festival on August 25 and the 2007 Chico World Music Festival on September 23.

The San Francisco Bay Guardian wrote "As America's finest purveyors of the forró sound, New York funksters Rob Curto's Forró For All combine a wildly imaginative jazz sensibility with their obvious reverence for traditional Brazilian get-down sounds and the fusion is exhilarating."

The Los Angeles Times wrote "... Curto's originals... combine traditional authenticity with persuasive dashes of jazz. While the percussion rhythms were undeniably irresistible, it was the imaginative improvising that took the music well beyond the level of dance accompaniment."

Rob Curto recently released "Piano de Fole" an album recorded in Brasília, Brazil, that represents the culmination of years of musical collaboration between Curto and Brasília producer and mandolin virtuoso Dudu Maia.

On this project Dudu and Rob worked together with musicians from Rio de Janeiro and Brasília to create something fresh and original, exploring new possibilities for the accordion, an instrument important in Brazilian music.

Included are Brazilian styles such as choro, samba, forró, valsa and xote and works by great Brazilian composers such as Jacob do Bandolim, Tom Jobim, and Gonzaguinha, as well as original compositions.

The group will be in the Los Angeles area on August 30. They will be performing at the Temple Bar in Santa Monica.

Service:

Forró for all at Santa Monica's Temple Bar

When: August 30, Thursday

Doors open at 8:30 pm

Reggae Nation plays at 10:00 pm

Forró for All presentation is at 11:00 pm

Tickets prices: \$15 at the door.

Address: 1026 Wilshire Blvd. in Santa Monica.

Tel: (310) 393-6611

Website: www.templebarlive.com

Forró For All's website: www.forroforall.com